

## A POLEMIC AGAINST *VITA ADAE ET EUAE* 12-17?

### *Bereshit Rabba* 8.10 (ed. Theodor-Albeck):

אמר ר' הושעיה בשעה שברא הקב"ה את אדם הראשון טעו בו מלאכי השרת ובקשו לומר לפניו קדוש למה הדבר דומה למלך ואפרכוס שהיו נותנין בקרוכין והיו בני המדינה מבקשין לומר למלך דומיני ולא היו יודעין אי זהו מה עשה המלך דחפו והשליכו מן הקרוכין וידעו את המלך כך בשעה שברא הקב"ה את אדם הראשון טעו בו מלאכים מה עשה הקב"ה הפיל עליו שינה וידעו הכל כי הוא אדם הה"ד חדלו לכם מן האדם וגו'.

R. Hoshaya said: At the time when the Holy One, blessed be He, created Adam, the ministering angels were misled by him<sup>1</sup> and they were preparing to recite the *Qedusha* before him.<sup>2</sup> What was this situation like? It was like that of a king and a governor who were riding together in a carriage. The citizens of the town wanted to shout before the king 'Domine!',<sup>3</sup> but they did not know which one was which. What did the king do? He shoved him (the governor) and threw him out of the carriage, and then they knew who was king. Similarly, at the time when the Holy One, blessed be He, created Adam, the ministering angels were misled by him. What did the Holy One, blessed be He, do? He cast a deep sleep on him, and then everyone recognized that he (i.e., the prone one) was Adam. For scripture affirms: 'Do not care about Adam ...' (Isa 2:22).<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> An honest mistake, if Gen 1:27 is to be understood literally.

<sup>2</sup> That portion of the daily prayer service that proclaims the 'holiness' (*qedushah*) of God. Its core consists of the successive recitation of Isa 6:3, Ezek 3:12, and Ps 146:10.

<sup>3</sup> Vocative of Latin *dominus* 'lord.'

<sup>4</sup> Discussed by Saul Lieberman, "Metatron, the Meaning of His Name and His Functions," *apud* Ithamar Gruenwald, *Apocalyptic and Merkavah Mysticism* (AGJU 14; Leiden: Brill, 1980) 239-40, but not in relation to the *Vita* scene.